

December 28, 2017

**ERIE COUNTY COUNCIL – Special Meeting**

Chairman Breneman called to order a Special Meeting of the Erie County Council at 1:00 p.m. at the Erie County Council Chambers, 140 West 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 117, Erie, PA. Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Mrs. Loll read the following prayer/invocation:

“Let us pray. Dear Lord, we are entering a new year, with a new start and a new beginning. We enter it with dedication and effort to serve the people who entrusted us to represent them with our vote and actions. We have the responsibility to steer the future of Erie County and we are determined to look forward with diligent effort and learning from the past. We have dedication to continue to improve the new ideas and keep moving forward. We are grateful for the confidence of our ability to lead and govern. Lord with your guidance we will be able to succeed. We ask for your direction in Jesus’ name. Amen.”.

**Roll Call**                      The County Clerk called the roll:

Members Present:    Mr. DiMattio  
                                 Mrs. Fatica  
                                 Dr. Foust  
                                 Mr. Horton  
                                 Mr. Leone  
                                 Mrs. Loll  
                                 Mr. Breneman

Members Absent:    None.

Also Present:           Douglas R. Smith, County Clerk  
                                 Sue Ellen Pasquale, Manager of Accounting  
                                 James Sparber, Director of Finance  
                                 Joseph Maloney, CPA

**Hearing of The Public**    None.

**Reports of  
County Officials**            None.

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Ord. 141, 2017 –  
Repeal of Ord. 124, 2017**    Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 141, 2017, “Repeal of Ordinance Number 124, 2017”. This was moved by Mr. Horton, seconded by Dr. Foust, and failed 4-3 (Mrs. Fatica, Mr. Leone, and Mrs. Loll voted No.) **This needed 5 “yes” votes to pass.**

**Override of Veto  
Ord. 126, 2017**                There was no override of the veto.

**Ord. 142, 2017 –  
Repeal of Ord.  
126, 2017**                      Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 142, 2017, “Repeal of Ordinance Number 126, 2017”. This was moved by Dr. Foust, seconded by Mr. Horton, and failed in a 4-3 vote (Mrs. Fatica, Mr. Leone, and Mrs. Loll voted No). **This needed 5 “yes” votes to pass.**

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**Ord. 143, 2017 –  
Auth. The Org.  
Of NIRF**

Mr. Smith gave a second reading of Ordinance Number 143, 2017, “Authorizing the Organization of the Neighborhood and Infrastructure Revitalization Fund”. This was moved by Dr. Foust and seconded by Mr. Horton.

Dr. Foust commented that he was certain where the votes would land with only four. He stated that both the Administration and members of Council need to keep in mind that right now, if this passes, it is the only proposal on the table where the County can begin to get the land bank business started. He felt any further delay is unnecessary and harmful to Erie County’s future prospects. Whatever goals members of Council have in mind regarding the land bank and issues of blight, etc., Dr. Foust felt they could be achieved through NIRF and through future discussions if Council bothers to have them. If Council members retrench in their particular camps and support that proposal and if they don’t like it they will vote against it, if that is done without any discussion as to how to get across the finish line and compromise to something that makes sense, Council will get nowhere. He stated that if this is passed today, it is the only proposal plan on the table that has received the majority of Council and he felt that is important as Council goes forward.

Chairman Breneman stated that through this process, he was neutral about a land bank option. It seems to him that Council had their hand forced into doing something or the money would go to another entity that has different composition and its mission is different than what the County was looking at. He commented that what he liked about Dr. Foust’s proposal was that it is good policy. It’s robust, it’s interesting, and Council doesn’t see too many interesting policy items like this come through. He has always railed against local elected officials because they haven’t done transformative things and tend to replicate and do the same thing over and over. He felt that what was presented here meets a multitude of needs for the community and it’s something that he could see an article in some national presentation on this and possibly an award from NaCO or CCAP. He stated the reason why it gave the edge above the stop-gap measure by the Administration, many of Council members knew that the County Planning Department was going to be without leadership and to Chairman Breneman, the time it takes to bring somebody on board, to get them used to the environment and the programs, and also for the staffing and everything that happens when you bring in new leadership into a department would cost significant delay and would also slow down the process of implementing something like this. To him, the question is what is more robust. He commented that Council could certainly improve upon it and he didn’t see either proposal as an end process, but it’s a start, and he felt that Dr. Foust’s proposal was presented as something that could be built upon moving forward.

He then commented that he has been someone who has worked up until the last day and if anyone is needed to do anything, be it raising county fees or doing anything that has been a goal of the Administration or anybody else, he thought it is in the Council’s best interest to keep working right up to the last day if need be to get something like this through. He is really hopeful that the next Council gives a lot of weight to the ideas and also know that whatever might come after the new year, there are always options available. Chairman Breneman had thought and expected more compromise and collaboration. He was a little disheartened by that and he sees things between Council and the Administration as boiler plate policy as a bad direction for County government.

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Mr. Leone agreed with Dr. Foust in discussing this and come to some type of agreement whether they like this plan or a future plan. He stated there is no doubt that this is necessary one way or another. He has reviewed Dr. Foust’s plan and he has done an excellent job, but that doesn’t mean he is in total agreement and is not in favor of giving it to ECGRA. Mr. Leone did not feel that ECGRA is capable of handling this particular type of plan. He felt that State law that has been passed he believes that shows ECGRA is not in that particular area.

Ordinance Number 143, 2017 then failed in a 4-3 vote (Mrs. Fatica, Mr. Leone, and Mrs. Loll voted No). **This needed 5 “yes” votes to pass.**

There being no further business, the meeting then adjourned at 1:11 p.m.

Deneé M. Breter, Council Secretary

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